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naked, she put it to the asp to be bitten. Others say, again, that she kept it in a box; and that she did prick and thrust it with a spindle of gold, so that the asp being angered withal, leaped out with great fury, and bit her in the arm. Howbeit, few can tell the truth. For they report also, that she had hidden poison in a hollow razor, which she carried in the hair of her head; and yet *there was no mark seen on her body*, or any sign discerned that she was poisoned; neither also did they find this serpent in her tomb; but it was reported only, that there were seen certain fresh tracks where it had gone, on the tomb side toward the sea, and especially by the door-side. Some say, also, that they found two little pretty bitings in her arm, scant to be discerned; the which, it seemeth, Cæsar himself gave credit unto, because in his triumph he carried Cleopatra's image, *with an asp biting of her arm.*"

This, it would seem, should be conclusive evidence that the asp was not introduced beneath the vestments of the bosom, as artists and poets have painted.

Cleopatra was the daughter of Ptolemy Auletes, King of Egypt, and born B. C., 69. She shared the kingdom with her brother, but whose tyranny she eventually threw off, through the assistance of Julius Cæsar, whose mistress she became, and to whom she bore one son, Cæsarion. She followed Cæsar to Rome, and received from him every homage of love. Her beauty served her well. Upon Cæsar's assassination, she fled to Egypt, strongly suspected with having abetted in the conspiracy of Brutus and Cassius. Obviously to look into the matter, but really to seize upon her government, Marc Antony proceeded to Alexandria, with a powerful force. Then commenced that brilliant generalship on the part of the matchless coquette, which ended in carrying the citadel of the Roman's virtue, and in making him the servant to her own commanding will. Marc Antony, instead of annexing Egypt to the domains of the Roman Empire, found himself annexed to Egypt's queen, in bonds against which his heart and purpose were powerless. If Julius Cæsar found her a "sallet girl," and yet yielded to her fascinations, how could it be hoped that Marc Antony should withstand the appeals of her full-bloom, and truly splendid womanhood? She floated down

the Cydnus in a barge whose magnificence has become a kind of wonder of history. In it she received Marc Antony, by invitation. As he came to call her to account he was expected to *command* her to his presence. She fathomed his weaknesses with a woman's subtlety, and her wiles soon won him from the missions of commander, to take the position of lord of her bed and heart.

The history of the loves of the susceptible Roman and the rarely voluptuous Egyptian, are too familiar through Shakespeare's splendid tragedy, to need rehearsal. After several years of vacillation between his duty and his passion, Marc Antony found himself again at Alexandria, in the arms of his mistress, and the mother of his two children—having deserted Rome and his lawful wife, Octavia, sister of Cæsar, for the society of Cleopatra. The anger of the Cæsars, and of the Roman people, being aroused at this desertion, and base uses which Antony was making of his power, a war upon the queen and her paramour was decreed, which ended in the irretrievable overthrow of the army and navy of Marc Antony. His suicide followed. Cleopatra fled to a tomb she had erected, wherein were all her jewels and gold, and valuables of every kind—all of which, together with herself and attending maids, she designed to consume by fire. But the shrewd Octavius thwarted that sublime catastrophe, by having the queen seized in her stronghold, ere she was aware. But no genius was equal to the task of thwarting the woman who had already made slaves of two Cæsars. Her maids arranged to introduce an adder to her, by means of a basket of figs, and the queen and her two attendants found their death in a sudden and startling manner. Octavius was completely thwarted in his purpose of carrying a queen in triumph to Rome, and Cleopatra was given up to history, as a woman tarnished by crimes, yet endowed with many virtues—sagacious in all things, save in the want of control over her voluptuous passion—of a pride perfectly matchless in its splendor—of a power of language and expression resistless in their wishes—of a beauty imposing, and, with her bodily graces, commanding. These things belonged to her, and now serve to elevate her into a recognition as one of the most marked women of personal and historic fame.

## THE PALACE OF IMAGINATION.

—  
BY FRANCES FULLER BARRITT.  
—

Full of beauty, full of art and treasure,  
Is that Palace where my soul was bound;  
Filled harmoniously with every pleasure  
Sweet to sense, or exquisite of sound.

Light whose softness rival summer shadows—  
Shadows only softer than the light,  
Like those clouds that dapple the June meadows,  
Make its chambers rarely dark and bright.

Nightingales are nested in its bowers;  
Unseen singers stir the fragrant air;  
Fountains drop their musical, cool shadows  
Into basins alabaster fair.

Ancient myths are storied here in marble,  
Busts of poets people every nook—  
Forms so like the 'iving, that the warble  
Of their voices thrills you as you look.

Rare creations of all times and ages,  
Wrought by inspiration of high art,  
Live in sculpture, speak from gilded pages,  
Throng with beauty its remotest part.

In this Palace did my soul awaken,  
From what Past it thirsted not to know;  
With the bright existence it had taken  
Wandering, tranced—like Cherubim a-glow.

Till, from dreaming, rose unquiet fancies—  
Frightful phantoms glided in and out:  
Gnomes and ghouls read of in old romances,  
Haunted all its shadowy halls about!

Then my soul sat with averted vision,  
Cold and pallid in a nameless fear,  
Seeing with inward eyes a new elysian  
Dream of pleasure, inaccessible here.

And she uttered, sighing deep and sadly,  
"Here, tho' all is fair, yet all is cold;  
I would change my matchless Palace gladly,  
For one hour of life in Love's warm fold."

This she said, and straight the sapphire air  
In the Palace, rosy grew, and gold;  
Statues pale, and pictures heavenly fair,  
Blushed and breathed like forms of earthly mold.

Happy laughter with the zephyrs mingled,  
Sweet young voices murmured Love's soft words;  
Lightning rays along my soul-nerves tingled,  
Till it fluttered like its young broad birds.

Now my soul no longer pale or pining,  
With sweet mirth makes its rare Palace sound;  
Golden light thro' every shadow shining,  
Shows the beauty living waste around.